

AROUND THE WORLD

Herald Representative Penetrates Most Ancient Underground Ruins and Makes Contribution to History.

CAIRO, EGYPT, Feb. 21, 1903.
Of unusual interest to every student of history is Memphis, one of the oldest cities of the world, a city that arose, flourished and fell before history was born to record her glory. Much has been learned concerning the ancient city of Memphis through its necropolis known as Sakkarah. The Egyptologist, Bey, says: "The history of Memphis is to a great extent the history of Heliopolis. Already founded under the most ancient kings, flourishing under the great pyramid-building fourth dynasty, neglected and abandoned under the 11th, 12th and 13th dynasties, Memphis, like Egypt itself, arose to new life when the kings of the 18th dynasty succeeded in clearing the soil of Egypt of its invaders. Taken and retaken by turns, under Assyrian, Ethiopian, and Persian dynasties, Memphis still preserved, under the Greeks, a portion of its ancient splendor, although when Strabo came, it was already deserted. But the time was coming when of Memphis nothing but ruins should remain, and when the sombre menaces of Jeremiah should be fulfilled to the letter; 'O, daughter of Egypt, make ready that which can serve thee in thy captivity, because Memphis shall become a desert; she shall be forsaken and become uninhabitable.'" If ever prophecy was fulfilled, this is a genuine case of it.

I took train fifteen miles out to Bedreshayn, where I hired a donkey and rode over to the ruins of Memphis, which lie scarcely three miles from the Bedreshayn station. I found mounds, fragments of buildings, walls, broken columns and wreckage everywhere as the only vestiges of that historic city which for ages experienced such a tremendous influence over the affairs of the world. I rode my donkey through streets so narrow that no donkey could turn around; I rode into houses where once all was happiness, splendor and magnificence; I rode up to a house on the accumulated dirt of centuries, dirt piled up until the ceiling was on a level with the surrounding country and my steed walked over the wall and down into a parlor or kitchen with perfect ease. This sight shocked me more than the sight of the great pyramid. To have the experience of riding over a city so historic as Memphis and at the same time to apply the words of Jeremiah to the scene as I went was a lesson that shall haunt me and make me ten-fold more brave in hurling Biblical philippics wherever they are needed. Heretofore I had read of fulfilled prophecy, but here I see it. Not an inhabitant is here, though men are constantly employed in excavating for buried treasures. One snap-shot at Memphis was at a bunch of trees that have grown fifty feet high, their roots in the dirt that has accumulated directly over a housetop. The picture ought to show the house, the dirt over it, and the tall trees growing still higher. Large statues of Rameses I and II, carved in the form of towering giants, are still to be seen; a charge to see the larger one is made.

I went out prepared to spend the day, taking lunch from Cairo. At the lunch hour a crowd of hungry, fly-eyed boys gathered about waiting for the scraps, hence I ate very little. On finishing, my donkey driver took charge of the remnants, and I supposed that he would give the boys what he did not care for, but just think of it, he made a sort of an ugly growl as if calling dogs, then threw the ragged scraps into the dirt and those boys flew after them, covering them with filth and slime from the excavations in their efforts to get the most. They wallowed and cuffed each other like foot-ball eleven rooting in the mud. Whenever a scrap was secured, the happy possessor quickly plunged it into his mouth, dirt and all, lest another might wrest it from his grasp. Such a sight upon the ruins of the once proud capital of Egypt was enough to make one sick at heart and wonder why a nation will, through disobedience and the trampling of divine jurisprudence, sow the seeds of its own disintegration and destruction.

Soon after my arrival in Cairo I met Mr. L. Dow Covington, an American, aged about forty years, who is superintending Egyptian antiquarian excavations, and whose fame has spread around the world. Through his foresight, planning and skill as an antiquarian many of the secrets of the interior of the great pyramids have been unlocked. On a wager, he slept six nights in the sarcophagi of the larger pyramids, once in each sar-

cophagus or tomb, and on the seventh night slept upon the summit of the great pyramid. He took the American flag with him and hoisted it so that at day break the people at the hotel sent the news broadcast that "America had taken Egypt and had planted the stars and stripes upon the pyramids." It is said that no other flag has ever floated from that summit. He slept in the tomb of the king, wearing no clothing except a white sheet and the stars and stripes, and he declares that an apparition haunted him. A noted European accompanied him another night and made a like report as to the visitor. Trying to sleep away back yonder in the heart of that pyramid in a coffin, reached partly by crawling through a long winding way constructed so as to deceive any discoverer, the tomb inhabited by bats, it is no wonder that they saw apparitions as one under such conditions would expect to see spectres, ghosts, hobgoblins and a thousand appearances a thousand-fold more uncanny than the headless horse-man of Sleepy Hollow.

As other people had made splendid "strikes" in discovering valuables Mr. Covington began prospecting. A half mile south of the great pyramid his iron rod struck something solid and after probing in every direction found that a long wall ran due north and south. Keeping the knowledge of his find quietly to himself, he secured from the Egyptian government a permit to excavate for two years on a tract of land embracing the desired spot. His right being secured he put a force of men to work and in one day had unearthed the top of a temple whose walls measure 180x90 feet. Sinking a shaft in the center, the temple was found to average 40 feet in height. From the work belonging to the ancient Egyptians found therein, experts pronounce it an edifice built during the first dynasty, which according to all authorities was 3600 B. C. at least, and some place it at 5005 B. C. It is pronounced the oldest temple unearthed in Egypt and hence the oldest piece of architecture in the known world, and also the only one of the kind in the world. When I arrived on the scene, he said: "You are very fortunate. I have just struck the tomb. I have just descended into it and returned. You go down and you will be the second person in thousands of years to see it." I quickly went to the shaft in the center of the temple, let myself down by use of a rope fastened above and by utilizing little toe pockets on each side. In this way I descended 40 feet, entered the tombs, which I followed at least 75 feet, using candles to find the way. When I returned he said: "It is surely remarkable that two Americans were to be the first ones to come here and open this establishment to the world after centuries of silence." You see, he is thoroughly American. I secured some alabaster fragments of dishes here, such as were then in use. I made a discovery here. Examining the ground at a point not touched by the spade, where it dipped over the walls and roof, I noticed several strata. The lower one consisted of clay; the next sand and gravel, shells, etc.; the next clay, then more sand and gravel, indicating that this building lay for years under the sea, and it is not hard to believe or postulate that that sea was the flood of the Bible. My geology teaches me that those strata observable were formed under water, hence if these postulates be true, we have the most wonderful sight imaginable, an edifice that grew grey with age untold years before the great deluge. But how came it to be covered? Rushing waters flowing from a higher level carried dirt, mud and rocks and thus filled the entire interior and also buried it out of sight completely so that you can now walk upon its topmost wall from the level of the surrounding terra firma. This event together with a few others makes the past two weeks the most eventful of all my history. Further interest is attached to this structure because it is found to be built directly in line with the great pyramid.

E. C. HORN.

(Continued next week.)

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